

Message Text

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INFO RUQMBI/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 0000

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARGUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

USMISSION NATO

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCEUR
CINCLANT
CINCPAC
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSNAVEUR
COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 156496

BEIRUT ALSO PASS BAGHDAD, MILITARY ADDEES ALSO FOR POLAD

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOGADISCIO 0922 ACTION SECSTATE INFO NAIROBI 30 JUN
75

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0922

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SO, US
SUBJECT: SOVIET BASE ISSUE: GSDR RESTRICTS ACCESS

1. JOURNALISTS WHO VISITED BERBERA JUNE 28 -- INCLUDING
ABC TELEVISION TEAM -- WERE DENIED ACCESS TO MISSILE
STORAGE AND SERVICING FACILITY. WE HAVE REPORT THAT ABC
FILM CREW WAS NOT RPT NOT ALLOWED TO TAKE FILM FOOTAGE.
WHILE WE DO NOT RPT NOT POSSESS ALL DETAILS AS YET,
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FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS PASSED TO US EVENING OF JUNE
29 BY AMERICAN JOURNALISTS.

2. GSDR TOOK TEAM OF JOURNALISTS TO BERBERA JUNE 28.
INCLUDED IN GROUP WERE REPORTERS FROM REUTERS, UPI, LE
MONDE, DAILY NATION, EAST AFRICAN STANDARD, AND ABC TV
CREW. JOURNALISTS SUCCEEDED IN GETTING GSDR HOSTS TO TAKE
THEM TO MISSILE STORAGE AND HANDLING FACILITY BUT OUTER

GATE WAS LOCKED AND SOMALI HOSTS SAID KEY NOT RPT NOT AVAILABLE. WE UNDERSTAND ABC TV TEAM WAS NOT RPT NOT ALLOWED TO TAKE FILM FOOTAGE. MOST VIGOROUS PROTESTS REGARDING DENIAL OF ACCESS CAME FROM REUTERS AND UPI REPS AND WE HAVE RECEIVED UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT SOME SORT OF ALTERCATION TOOK PLACE AT GATE.

3. JOURNALISTS LEFT BERBERA WITHOUT SEEING MISSILE HANDLING FACILITY. SINCE THEY DID NOT RPT NOT RETURN TO MOGADISCIO ON SAME DAY, SOME JOURNALISTS PREPARED STORIES REPORTING INCIDENTS AT BERBERA AND GAVE COPY TO MININFO OFFICIALS WHO WERE RETURNING IMMEDIATELY TO MOGADISCIO AND ASKED THAT STORIES BE FILED WITH POST AND TELEGRAPH.

4. WHEN JOURNALISTS RETURNED TO MOGADISCIO JUNE 29, HOWEVER, MININFO HAD NOT RELEASED STORIES. THOSE JOURNALISTS WHO IMMEDIATELY ATTEMPTED FILE STORIES ON THEIR OWN WERE TOLD LINE WAS OUT. EAST AFRICA FLIGHT TO NAIROBI WHICH WAS TO TAKE ABC FILM CREW JUNE 29 WAS CANCELLED.

5. EVENING OF JUNE 29 AND MORNING OF JUNE 30, RADIO MOGADISCIO CARRIED RADIO COMMENTARY ALLEGING THAT AMONG JOURNALISTS IN GROUP WERE THOSE WHO HAD COME TO SPY ON SOMALI NAVAL INSTALLATIONS.

6. JUNE 30 ISSUE OF SOMALI NEWS BULLETIN (SONNA) CARRIED FOLLOWING STATEMENT FROM MININFO AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE WHICH HAD BEEN RELEASED JUNE 29:

QTE SPOKESMAN FOR MIN INFO AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE TODAY SAID THAT SOLE AIM BEHIND INVITATION OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS TO NORTHERN PORT OF BEBERA WAS TO LET THEM SEE FOR THEMSELVES THAT NO FOREIGN MILITARY BASE EXISTS IN THAT AREA.
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QTE HOWEVER, THE SPOKESMAN WENT ON, PURPOSE OF INVITATION DID NOT RPT NOT MEAN THAT JOURNALISTS WHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO SEE AND COUNT SOMALIA'S NAVAL WEAPONRY IN AREA.

QTE IT HAS BEEN DISCLOSED THAT PURPOSE OF WESTERN PRESSMEN WHO YESTERDAY VISITED BERBERA WAS NOT RPT NOT TO VERIFY EXISTENCE OF BASE BUT WERE RATHER INTERESTED TO KNOW THE DETAILS OF THE WEAPONS OF SOMALI NAVY.

QTE THERE IS NO RPT NO NATION THAT IS OBLIGED TO DISPLAY ITS ARMAMENTS TO FOREIGN JOURNALISTS AND SOMALIA IS NOT RPT NOT AN EXCEPTION BECAUSE THAT IS TANTAMOUNT TO INFRINGEMENT ON OUR SOVEREIGN RIGHTS.

QTE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT MANY JOURNALISTS WHO HAD SINCERE MOTIVES WERE SHOWN AROUND BERBERA AND ACTUALLY BECAME CONVINCED THAT THERE WAS NO RPT NO BASE AS CLAIMED BY US DEFENSE DEPARTMENT.

QTE EARLIER THIS WEEK THREE MAN TV TEAM FROM COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM (CBS) WHO HAVE VISITED BERBERA DECLARED THAT THEY SAW NO BASE AT ALL.

QTE THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE BASE WHICH THE US GOVERNMENT CLAIMS TO EXIST IN SOMALIA COULD NOT RPT NOT BE CONFOUNDED WITH ANY OTHER THING. UNQTE

7. SEVERAL US NEWSMEN -- HENRY TANNER OF NY TIMES, DUSKO DODER OF WASHINGTON POST, AND MULLEN OF US NEWS WORLD REPORT -- ARRIVED MOGADISCIO JUNE 29 AND ARE AWAITING MININFO SPONSORED TRIP TO BERBERA. THEY WILL PROBABLY BE SIMILARLY RESTRICTED IN THEIR ACCESS TO BERBERA FACILITIES.

8. SAME RESTRICTIONS WILL NO DOUBT APPLY IN VISIT OF US SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN.

HAMRICK

UNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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06 JUL 2006

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